

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 124

Recognizing the threats to press freedom and expression around the world and reaffirming press freedom as a priority in the efforts of the United States to promote democracy and good governance, on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day on May 3, 2009.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 30, 2009

Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself, Mr. KAUFMAN, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the threats to press freedom and expression around the world and reaffirming press freedom as a priority in the efforts of the United States to promote democracy and good governance, on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day on May 3, 2009.

Whereas, in 1993, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed May 3 of each year as “World Press Freedom Day” to celebrate the fundamental principles of press freedom, to evaluate the state of press freedom around the world, to defend the media from attacks on the independence of the media, and to pay tribute to journalists who have lost their lives in the line of duty;

Whereas, according to the International Federation of Journalists, at least 109 journalists and other media workers were killed in 2008 while on assignment;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, nearly 3 out of 4 journalists killed in the line of duty are murdered, and the killers go unpunished in nearly 9 of 10 cases;

Whereas, according to estimates by Reporters Without Borders, in 2008, 673 journalists were arrested, 929 journalists were physically attacked or threatened, and 29 journalists were kidnapped;

Whereas Freedom House reported that press freedom has been declining during recent years in both authoritarian countries and established democracies;

Whereas, reflecting the rise in influence of Internet reporting, an increasing number of online editors, bloggers, and web-based reporters are being imprisoned and their websites closed; and

Whereas press freedom is a key component of democratic governance and socio-economic development and enhances public accountability, transparency and participation:
Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) recognizes the threats to press freedom and
3 expression around the world, on the occasion of
4 World Press Freedom Day on May 3, 2009;

5 (2) commends journalists around the world for
6 the essential role they play in promoting government

1 accountability and strengthening civil society, despite
2 numerous threats;

3 (3) pays tribute to the journalists who have lost
4 their lives in the line of duty;

5 (4) condemns all actions around the world that
6 suppress press freedom;

7 (5) reaffirms the centrality of press freedom to
8 efforts by the United States to support democracy,
9 mitigate conflict, and promote good governance
10 around the world; and

11 (6) calls on the President and the Secretary of
12 State to develop means by which the United States
13 Government can more rapidly identify, publicize, and
14 respond to threats against press freedom around the
15 world.

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